

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

[0002] The present invention relates to a method and a system for individually renting a private car and more particularly to the method and system for individually renting the private car which ~~are~~ is suitably applied to a case where a traveler rents the private car of ~~an other which is not used another~~ at a place where ~~a journey is made~~ car travel is begun and to a storage medium storing control program to control the same.

[0005] Generally, when a traveler rents a car at a place where ~~a journey is made~~ car travel is begun, the traveler rents a rental car from a local business office of a car-rental company.

[0006] A conventional car rental system of this type is, as shown in Fig. 4, includes a dealer terminal 1 and a database 2. The dealer terminal 1 ~~is made up of~~ includes, for example, a personal computer, and Car rental terms ~~of rent of a car~~ desired by the traveler are input ~~therein~~ into dealer terminal 1 by ~~manipulation of~~ the traveler and/or a dealer. The database 2 is made up of, for example, a storage device such as a hard disk and information about a stock state of the rental car is accumulated therein.

[0007] In the conventional rental system, when the traveler visits the local business office of the car-rental company, car rental terms ~~of a rental car~~ desired by the traveler are input into ~~to~~ the dealer terminal 1 and information stored in the database 2 is retrieved and, if there is a stock of a rental car that can meet the terms desired by the traveler, the rental car is rented to the traveler.

[0008] However, the above conventional rental system has shortcomings. ~~the following problems.~~ For example, ~~That is,~~ since the rental car that can be rented is limited to cars possessed by the car-rental company, the stock of the rental car of a model which the traveler is desirous to rent has run short in many cases.

[0009] In view of the above, it is an object of the present invention to provide a method and a system for individually renting a private car owned by a first customer that enables a traveler (a second customer) to easily rent the private car that the traveler desires to rent (~~from a the first customer~~) at a place where car travel is begun ~~a journey is made~~ and a storage medium storing control program to control the same.

[0010] According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for individually renting a private car employed in an individual private car renting system made up of a first dealer terminal, dealer server, second dealer terminal, and communication ~~line~~ lines, the method including :

[0011] receiving and processing a first customer information ~~transmitting~~ processing causing the first dealer terminal to produce unused period information representing a period during which the private car possessed by a first customer is not used, private car information representing a model of the private car, and car housing place information representing a place where the private car is housed during the unused period;

[0011.1] ~~and to transmit them~~ transmitting said first customer information to the communication ~~line~~ lines as the first customer information;

[0048] ~~Best modes of carrying out the~~ The present invention will be described in further detail using various embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0050] Figure 1 is a block diagram showing configurations of an individual rental system of a private car to implement a method for individually renting the private car according to an embodiment of the present invention. As shown in Fig. 1, the individual rental system of the private car includes a first dealer terminal 11, a dealer server 12, and a second dealer terminal 13. The first dealer terminal 11 is made up of an information processing device such as a personal computer and has a CPU (Central Processing Unit) 11a adapted to control the entire first dealer terminal 11 and a storage medium 11b such as a ROM (Read Only Memory) storing control programs to operate the CPU 11a. The first dealer terminal 11 is installed at a local business

office of a private car rental company or a like which is placed in a region where a first customer (hereinafter referred to as a customer A) ~~lives and~~ produces information about an unused period while a private car possessed by the customer A is not used (for example, a scheduled traveling period during which the customer A does not use the private car due to a long term business trip), a model of the private car and housing place where the private car is housed during the unused period and transmits the information as first customer information I11 to a communication line (for example, an intranet TN).

[0053] The second dealer terminal 13 is installed at a local business office of the private car rental company or a like which is placed in a region where a second customer (hereinafter referred to as a customer B) ~~lives and~~ receives the private car availability information I12 through the intranet TN and informs the customer B who is scheduled to visit the region where the housing place of the private car possessed by the customer A exists, of the private car availability information I12 and the customer B reads the private car availability information I12 and, if a private car that can be rent exists, generates rent request information I13 representing a desire for renting the private car and then transmits it to the intranet TN. Moreover, the dealer server 12 receives the rent request information I13 through the intranet TN from the second dealer terminal 13 and transfers the rent request information I13 to the first dealer terminal 11 through the intranet TN and, at the same time, updates the private car availability information I12 based on the rent request information I13.

[0057] Thus, according to ~~the~~ an embodiment of the present invention, since the first customer information I11 including the information about a scheduled traveling period of the customer A is input to the dealer server 12 and the private car availability information I12 is provided to the customer B through the second dealer terminal 13, the customer B can rent a car that the customer B wants to rent at a place where a journey is made. This enables the customer A to effectively utilize the private car that the customer A is not using at present. Moreover, the dealer can obtain information about the private car of the customer A (for example, a model name and/or a model year of the private car which can be used for sales activities of new cars).

[0058] It is apparent that the present invention is not limited to the above embodiment but may be changed and modified without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention. For example, the number of the dealer terminals 11 and 13 may vary as needed ~~be arbitrary~~. The dealer terminals 11 and 13 are not limited to the personal computer and any purpose-built terminal may be used. ~~In the embodiment, though the customer A is a party from whom the car is rented and the customer B is a party to whom the car is rented, they may be reverse.~~ As the communication lines, in addition to the intranet TN, the Internet may be used. ~~However, in this case, since, in some cases,~~ Since private information of the customers A and B ~~are~~ is contained in the first customer information I11, private car availability information I12, and rent request information I13, it is necessary to provide security protection to include, but not limited to the dealer server 12 with a function of a firewall and encryption. ~~to and encrypt each piece of the~~

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. Serial No. 09/900,892

Art Unit 3629
Q65348

~~information and dealer terminals 11 and 13 with a function of decrypting the encrypted
information accordingly.~~